



# THIS WEEK IN IRAQ



Vol.2, No. 9

[www.mnf-iraq.com](http://www.mnf-iraq.com)

March 6, 2006

## Top Stories

**Soldiers  
reach out,  
Page 3**



**Police  
academy  
builds  
security,  
Page 5**



**Capturing  
caches,  
Page 7**



**Iraqis  
stepping up,  
Page 12**



U.S. Marine Corps photo by Cpl. Mark Sixbey

Cpl. Peder Ell from Savage, Minn., a combat engineer with the 5th Marine Regiment removes an 82 mm mortar from a weapons cache found during Operation Iron Fist on Feb. 25. The 1st Marine Expeditionary Force took the Iraqi Freedom mission in Iraq's west al Anbar Province from the 2nd Marine Expeditionary Force this week.

## Marines return to Iraq after 3 years

Story by Cpl. Jon C. Guibord  
1st Marine Expeditionary Force

**CAMP FALLUJAH** — The Marine command that spearheaded combat operations in Iraq in 2003 assumed responsibility for training Iraqi Security Forces in western Iraq during a transfer-of-authority ceremony Tuesday.

First Marine Expeditionary Force (Forward) took charge of the Al Anbar Province from the North Carolina-based 2nd Marine Expeditionary Force (Forward).

The ceremony officially relieved the II MEF command of its Multi-National Force - West title and bestowed the California-based I MEF with the new job. Commanded by Maj. Gen. Richard C. Zilmer, I MEF (Forward) MNF-W is com-

posed of active and reserve Marine, Army, and Navy units from throughout the United States.

"I am here to tell you that I MEF is ready to assume our position as part of this great force," said the Reading, Penn., native and graduate of Kutztown University, Penn.

The Marines spent the past year preparing for its deployment to Iraq by training in the Southern California coastal base Camp Pendleton, Calif., and Marine Combined Air Ground Combat Center in 29 Palms, Calif., in the Mojave Desert.

Zilmer and Sgt. Maj. Thomas H. Howard, I MEF sergeant major, unfurled the unit's colors carried by an MNF-W color guard, which included an Iraqi

See *Marines*, Page 10

**GENERAL CASEY'S CORNER**

# The wake of success

The crisis generated by the bombing of the Golden Dome in Samarra has subsided. As I said last week, Iraq has passed a crucial test in their journey to becoming a democratic country. There is a terrorist threat here that will stop at nothing to undermine the formation of this constitutionally elected government, a government of national

unity and a government that represents all Iraqis. They tried to make the bombing of the Golden Dome mosque the straw that broke the camel's back and it failed. Iraqis rose to the occasion. Have no doubt, there are still sectarian tensions that the Iraqis will have to work through. However, throughout this sensitive period the Multi-National Force - Iraq will continue to monitor the situation and support the government of Iraq.

The mosque incident provides insights into the changing situation in Iraq. First, we saw a return to the killing of innocent civilians as evidenced by the desperate terrorists' attempts to subvert the government by all means. Over a three-day span in Baghdad during the unrest there were 71 deaths and 62 others injured because of a blitz of vehicle-borne improvised explosive devices, a suicide vest attack and an improvised explosive device. These were senseless attacks from an enemy that is desperate to stop Iraq from coming together as a nation. These attacks are in line with a trend that we continue to see, an increased amount of civilian casualties.

Second, we saw a maturing capa-

**By Gen. George W. Casey**  
Multi-National Force - Iraq  
Commanding General



**"The people of Iraq will not blindly follow the lead of the terrorists - they are consciously ignoring the temptation for unrest and moving toward democracy."**

bility by the Iraqi Police and Iraqi Army to cooperate and operate effectively in providing domestic order during demonstrations and in dealing with militias around the country. Iraqi security ministries and Iraqi Security Forces leadership directed the operations and the Coalition responded in a supporting role. The Iraqi Transitional Government reacted decisively by imposing curfews, driving bans, making public calls for calm and effectively bringing down the levels of violence countrywide.

Along with those insights, the changing nature of the conflict and the reactions by the government and its security forces provides a glimpse into the future of Iraq. The people of Iraq will not blindly follow the lead of the terrorists - they are consciously ignoring the temptation for unrest and moving toward democracy. Additionally, this incident highlights the need

for the Iraqi government to deal with the militia issue in the very near future. That is a good thing. While some may have seen militias as their protectors in the past, the proven abilities of the ISF during this incident shows the reason, and time, for militias has come to an end. Ultimately, Iraq cannot succeed until the Iraqi Security Forces - the police and the military - are the only ones in Iraq with guns.

Those difficult few days in Iraq came at a sensitive time. While the danger is not completely past, the Iraqis have again risen to the occasion against the terror that is trying to deny them their future, and they won.

## Photos around the Fertile Crescent



A convoy of trucks from al Asad rolls into the holding yard at Trebil on the Jordan border after completing a 300-mile trek across Iraq. The move was conducted by the 48th Brigade Combat Team.



Seabees Augusto Saulo and Dewain Smith pound a grounding rod for the new Morale, Welfare and Recreation workout facility at Combat Outpost Rawah. The previous MWR was in a tent.



Spc. Craig Naputi Quinata primes the raw water pump that draws water from a canal near Muqdadiyah. The water purification specialist is with the 909th Quartermaster Detachment from Guam.



A member of a Polish explosive ordnance unit moves to gain a closer look at unexploded ordnance that lies in the road after a simulated mortar attack during an exercise staged by members of MND-CS at Camp Echo.

**THIS WEEK IN**  
**IRAQ** Online

[www.mnf-iraq.com](http://www.mnf-iraq.com)



# A network of change brings new life

Story by Sgt. Ann Drier  
363rd Mobile Public Affairs Detachment

**BAGHDAD** — Most Americans take running water, flushing toilets, weekly trash pickup and electricity 24-hours-a-day for granted.

As part of rebuilding of Iraq, Coalition forces and the government of Iraq are working together to provide these services to the entire country.

According to the Iraqi Essential Services Committee, there has been 1,279 projects bringing services to Baghdad and outlying areas since 2003.

These projects include sewer and water lines, electricity substations, trash collection services, education programs, and equipment procurement. About 875 have been completed.

Contractors and the Iraqi government have brought change to the lives of average Iraqi citizens.

There are challenges, most notably the tendency for terrorists to destroy newly created services.

"We really do work hard to realize the completion of these projects," said Brig. Gen. David Halverson, assistant division commander for support with the 4th Infantry Division.

"We're leaning heavily on our Iraqi brothers to help stop the destruction and tell them that nothing good will come to

them until the bad people stop," he said.

"It's a lengthy process, especially with the water and sewer projects," said Halverson. "We have to make sure no new problems happen."

One example of success, is the 900,000 yards of sewer pipe laid in Rashid, which serves 200,000 people. The North Kirkuk reservoir has been modernized and chlorinated, which brings clean water to Baghdad.

"Residents will have drinking water that they didn't have before," said Halverson. "Some 3.1 million people will be affected by this."

These projects, while providing services previously unknown in many parts of rural Iraq, also provide needed jobs and income to citizens, said Halverson. Throughout the region, 20,449 Iraqi nationals are employed working on all types of projects. According to Lt. Col. Otto Busher, Essential Services team chief, most family



U.S. Air Force photo by Tech. Sgt. John M. Foster

**Iraqi children pose for a photo while U.S. Army members with the 172nd Infantry Brigade pull security during a needs assessment in Tal Kayf on Wednesday.**

units number 10 people, so there is a significant employment impact on a neighborhood level.

According to committee members, one of the major issues facing the reconstruction efforts is providing security for these projects against insurgents. While it is still an issue, statistics show the number of projects targeted and destroyed has decreased during the past year.

## Karbala kids and U.S. Soldiers test mood

Story and photo by Cpl. Michael Molinaro  
2nd Brigade Combat Team, 4th Infantry Division

**KARBALA** — Soldiers are sometimes uncertain of the feelings Iraqis may have toward Coalition Forces.

In Karbala it's different; the relationship is healthy and friendly.

Soldiers from Company F, 1st Battalion, 67th Armor Regiment, 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 4th Infantry Division, met and talked with Karbala residents during a civil affairs mission last week.

While the civil affairs team conducted its business, the Soldiers patrolled the town to survey the average prices of common goods sold by vendors and

gauge the response of Iraqis to the American Soldiers, said 1st Lt. Thomas Gromus, executive officer, Company F.

The patrol consisted of five Soldiers and an interpreter, who mingled with locals for more than an hour, handing out candy purchased from a vendor to children who gathered around. The Soldiers engaged locals in cheerful conversation, and several Soldiers joined in soccer games.

"It felt good to know that the people of



**A Soldier with the 4th Infantry Division mingles with Iraqi school children on the streets of Karbala.**

Karbala enjoyed some positive interaction with American Soldiers," said Gromus.

**MNF-I Commanding General**

Gen. George W. Casey Jr.

**MNF-I Strategic Effects Communications Division Chief**

Brig. Gen. Rudy Wright

**MNF-I Strategic Effects Communications Division Deputy Chief**

Col. Dewey G. Ford

**Combined Press Information Center Director**

Lt. Col. Barry A. Johnson  
barry.johnson@iraq.centcom.mil

**124th Mobile Public Affairs Commander**

Maj. Christopher D. Dockery

**Command Information Chief**

Capt. Bradford E. Leighton  
bradford.leighton@iraq.centcom.mil

**Command Information NCOIC**

Sgt. Jeffrey M. Lowry  
jeff.lowry@iraq.centcom.mil

**Editor**

Spc. David J. Claffey  
david.claffey@iraq.centcom.mil

**Assistant Editor**

Spc. Richard L. Rzepka  
richard.rzepka@iraq.centcom.mil

**Staff**

Spc. Jeremy D. Pitcher  
jeremy.pitcher@iraq.centcom.mil

*This Week in Iraq* is an authorized publication produced by Multi-National Force - Iraq. Contents are not the official views of the U.S. Government or DoD. The editorial content is the responsibility of the Public Affairs Office of the Multi-National Force - Iraq. Questions and comments should be directed to the editor at [MNFInewsletter@iraq.centcom.mil](mailto:MNFInewsletter@iraq.centcom.mil).



# Caring for children

Story and photo by  
Staff Sgt. Britt Smith  
48th Brigade Combat Team PAO

**CAMP ADDER** — On a sunny afternoon in a small village, a group of 48th Brigade Combat Team Soldiers made life a little better for Iraqis.

The 48th BCT conducted a medical outreach program at the Shaheed Al Mehrab School. This rural school hosted a group of medical professionals who, along with their Iraqi counterparts, provided medical treatment to people who might not otherwise get the care they need.

There was an air of excitement as the members of Company C, 148th Support Battalion unloaded their equipment and set up shop in the school's vacant classrooms.

"There's nothing better than seeing the face of a happy child," said 1st Lt. Todd Hull a physicians assistant with Co. C. "Here we get to see both the culture and the people; we get to interact a lot more with the people," he said.

Soldiers from the 48th BCT come from a variety of civilian backgrounds. Staff Sgt. Debra Owens, who works for the Department of Justice in Atlanta, is a medic with the 148th SB and enjoys the ability to connect with people of different cultures and backgrounds.

"It gives me a chance to get out and treat them, to see their struggles."

The backgrounds are different, and so are their reasons for serving their country.

"I wanted to help. The United States has given me a life that is diverse and I am lucky to live in our country, so when there is a call, I answer



**1st Lt. Catherine Horton with the 144th Area Support Medical Company, Utah Army National Guard shows an Iraqi child how to use a rubber glove to make a balloon animal during a recent medical assistance program near An Nasiriyah in southern Iraq.**

it," said 1st. Lt. Catherine Horton, a member of the Utah Army National Guard.

Horton is a physicians assistant with the 144th Area Support Medical Company. She used to serve in the Peace Corps.

"A lot of my friends were sitting around complaining, not understanding what was going on over here. The only way to understand was to do, so that is why I'm here in Iraq."

Medical care was not the only outreach effort. Soldiers also distributed clothes, shoes and other items donated by Soldiers and folks back home in the United States. The desire to help others motivated Spc. Marlene Raymond, a supply specialist with Co. C. Raymond, a full time college student at Georgia Military College in Milledgeville, felt a

need to help.

"It's very good and fulfilling to help. I see the kids without shoes. It's not what I'm used to, so I want to be here. I would do this everyday if I could."

The local Iraqi citizens were as grateful to receive assistance, as the Soldiers were to provide it.

The visit lasted more than four hours as the medical team treated a long line of people and the 48th Civil Affairs Soldiers distributed donated clothing. After it was over, the Soldiers of the 48th BCT packed up their trucks, happy knowing that their efforts on a sunny afternoon in a small village in southern Iraq helped to make a difference in somebody's life.

A young girl, holding her new clothes said a simple "Shoukran" - thank you.





## Poet of the Week

# Soldier puts his thoughts to verse

Story and Photo by Sgt. Dennis Gravelle  
138th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment

**BEIJI** — There are several ways for Soldiers deployed overseas to pass the time, such as playing cards, reading, watching movies or playing sports. How about writing poetry.

Staff Sgt. Roderick Boykin has been writing poetry in his spare time for nearly 20 years. He says that it's more than a just a way a to pass the time.

"It started as a way to cope with growing up in the ghetto. I just wrote about places that I wanted to be."

A high school teacher recognized his writing talent and encouraged him to continue. When other young men Boykin's age were playing sports, he preferred to sit under a tree and write about the world around him. "Miss Peacock was my 11-grade English teacher and she really made an impression on me."

Boykin's ability to put thought to paper comes naturally. His mother and sister also enjoy "picking up a pen and writing with rhyming sounds." He says he will stop and write whenever he has an inspiration. Several of his poems have been published and he has many more that could be, but he says he has been procrastinating.



### *Love From Your Son!* *By Roderick Boykin*

You gave me the gift of Life  
And you gave me the start of living  
You made a lot of sacrifices  
You were receiving as well as giving

The days of spending time together  
Have all but come to a sudden halt  
I know the day will come  
When we will again talk and take that walk

As the people mourn your passing  
I am at peace from deep, deep within  
I have not only called you my father  
But I also considered you my dearest friend

You lived the life that a man wanted to live  
And along the way you made achievements and mistakes  
I honor the position that I have as your son  
And with you, My Love I hope you would take

Do not worry about me and where I am  
I know that you will continue to father me  
From the heavenly skies that lie above  
And one day my soul to will be at peace and free

So, as I close my words to you and I say  
Let no one come to you with issues undone  
And let no one tell you that I did not Love you  
And these are the words to my Father from his Son!

## Police academies the foundation for security

Story and photo by  
Staff Sgt. Mark Wojciechowski  
133rd Mobile Public Affairs Detachment

**MUQDADIYAH** — Police academies, such as the Scorpion Training Academy at Forward Operation Base Normandy, are changing perceptions about Iraqi Police.

The main objective at the Scorpion Training Academy in Muqdadiyah is to build a security force capable of stabilizing Iraq.

Scorpion academy recruits are charging through a two-week course that teaches the tools an Iraqi police officer needs.

Dedicated instructors, who are all Iraqi police officers, run a precise, disciplined course.

Searching rooms, clearing obstacles, detaining or killing the enemy and learning first aid, are all important to

becoming a protector of the Iraqi people, said one instructor.

There is minimal coalition involvement in the training. Coalition Forces oversee and shadow the recruits and instructors and give feedback to the instructors.

Staff Sgt. Michael Barnette of the 101st Airborne Division's 1st Squadron, 32nd Cavalry Regiment oversees the training at the Scorpion academy.

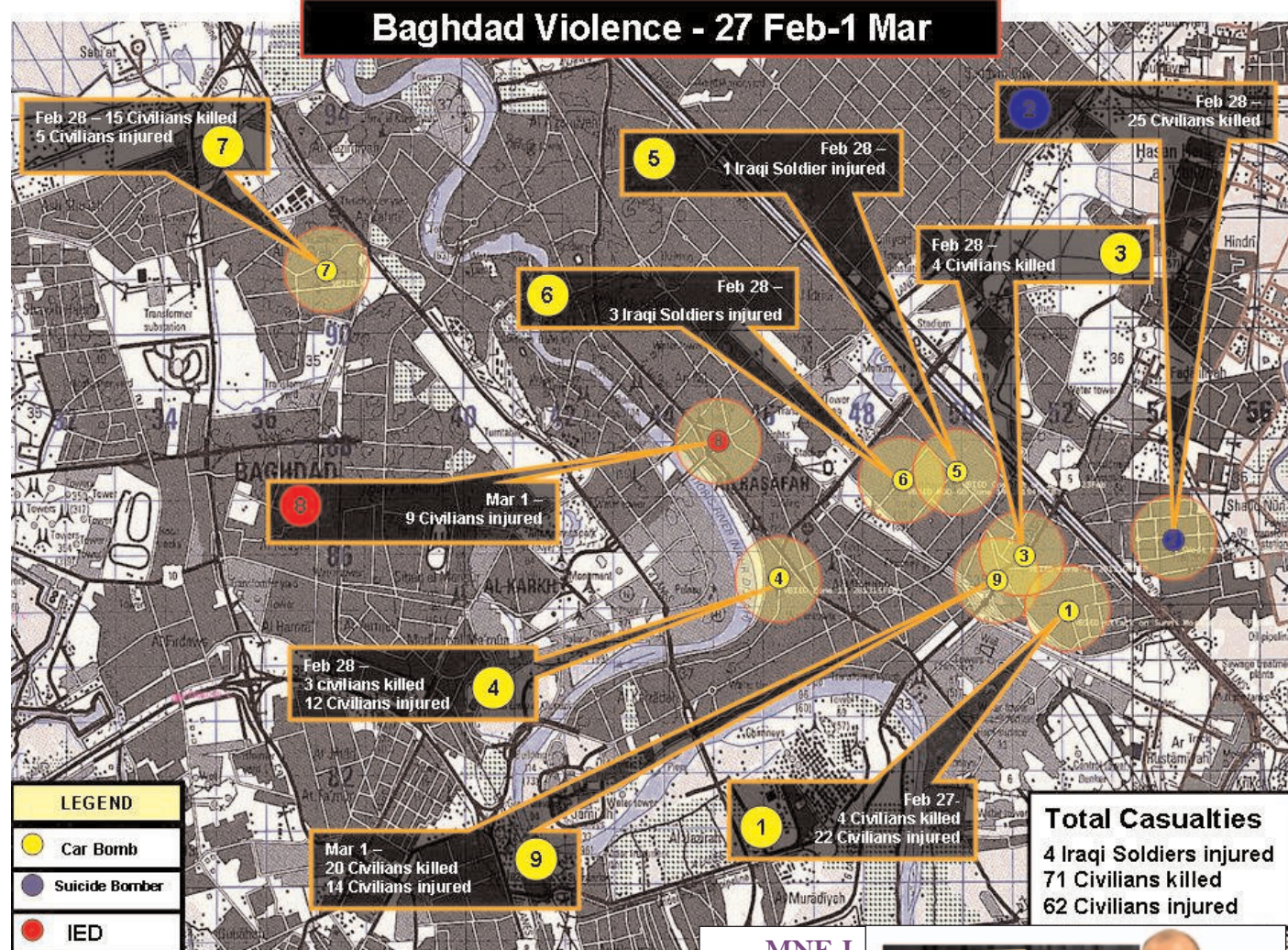
"The instructors and recruits are building daily to provide safety for the people of Iraq," he said

**An Iraqi Police recruit secures a stairwell during training at the Scorpion Training Academy in Diyala Province.**



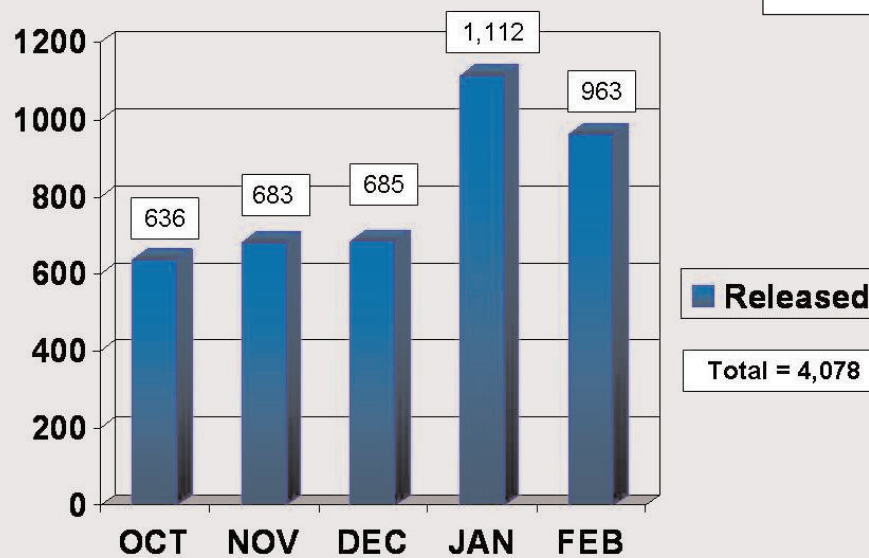


## Baghdad Violence - 27 Feb-1 Mar



## Detainee Releases

Oct 05 - Feb 06



## MNF-I Weekly Press Conference



### On Sectarian Violence

"Over the last three days, just inside of Baghdad we've seen seven VBIEDs, one suicide attack, and one IED. And the effect of those attacks was 71 civilians killed and 62 civilians injured. We have seen a 55 percent increase in civilian casualties in the last week, because the insurgents are targeting innocent civilians. The most horrendous of the attacks was the suicide attack at the gas station on the 28th, in which 25 civilians were killed. Again, innocent civilians, trying to go about their day-to-day life here in Baghdad, were killed by these terrorists."

### On Detainees Releases

"There's a very detailed process called a Combined Review and Release Board. On this board are six Iraqis and three coalition force members. And what they do is they look at each of the files of people who have been detained for over six months. They review those files every 90 to 120 days. And a determination is made that that individual is no longer a threat to the security of Iraq"



# Boom goes the dynamite

Story and photo by Sgt 1st Class Walter E. van Ochten  
133rd Mobile Public Affairs Detachment

**DAWR** — Iraqi and Coalition Soldiers found a stash of bomb-making materials during a house search in Dawr.

Members of the 1st Company, 1st Battalion, 1st Brigade, 4th Iraqi Army Division conducted a joint-search operation with members of Alpha Troop, 2nd Squadron, 9th U.S. Cavalry attached to the Rakkasans of the 3rd Brigade Combat Team, 101st Airborne Division, finding most of the materials needed to make improvised explosive devices.

The stash was found during a routine house-to-house search in a section of Ad Dawr that had been the site of an IED attack against Coalition Forces only the night before.

Inside an old empty water tank in the backyard, Staff Sgt. Dustin Smith, of 2nd Platoon, found a number of disassembled electronic devices, the wrapping plastic from a 155 mm artillery round, a blasting cap and a military optical device.

The only thing missing were the explosives.

"The reason today was so successful is having Soldiers like Sergeant Smith who know what to look for," said the patrol leader, Sgt. 1st Class Rollin Lansford.

At first, the man who lived at the house tried to explain the items as things he used for fishing, but stopped talking once asked about the optical device.

According to Lansford, this was a good bust because he had never seen either the man or the house on any suspect list.

"We didn't have any intelligence that this guy was suspicious in any way" said Lansford.

The suspect was taken to nearby Forward Operating Base Wilson for further questioning.

This house was only the third of 20



Sgt. Louie Dominguez (foreground) and Staff Sgt. Dustin Smith of the 101st Airborne Division search through suspected bomb-making materiel.

houses the Soldiers would search. As the man was taken away, Lansford and his Soldiers moved on to search the next house.

# Iraqi Air Force spreads its wings

Story by Staff Sgt. Melissa Koskovich  
American Forces Press Service

**BAGHDAD** — A fully certified aircrew takes flight.

This feat is a giant step toward independence and national security to Iraqi airmen training side by side here with U.S. Air Force members.

Since November, the U.S. Air Force has taken on the mission of standing up the Iraqi Air Force, enabling Iraqis to gradually take over operations and help secure their nation's future.

"In only a few months they have made significant progress," U.S. Air Force Brig. Gen. David W. Eidsaune, Air Component Coordination Element director, said. "We're working closely with them on a plan for their future. We agree



U.S. Air Force photo by Master Sgt. Lance Cheung

**An Iraqi loadmaster monitors the engine start-up of a C-130E Hercules, on of a growing fleet of aircraft operated by the Iraqi Air Force.**

on where they're going and how to get there."

Iraqi airmen agree that progress has been made, but know there's still a long road to

travel.

"We are starting over," Iraqi Air Force Chief of Staff Maj. Gen. Kamal Barzanji said. "America has given us a lot of

help, and we have already accomplished many things, but we need to keep growing."

Building an air force is no simple undertaking.

# Raids play large role in controlling terror

Story by Sgt. Kristopher Joseph  
Multi-National Corps - Iraq

Coalition Forces conducted raids in the Hayy al Madani District of Hubbaniya on Thursday to flush out al Qaeda in Iraq terrorists.

Coalition Forces raided 15 structures and detained 10 men. The men will be questioned regarding their knowledge of and involvement in terrorism.

During the raids, troops discovered a terrorist safe house with multiple weapons hidden throughout the house. The house and all weapons were destroyed. There was no additional damage to nearby buildings.

## Tips and terror

Responding to a tip, Soldiers from 2nd Brigade, 9th Iraqi Army Division and the U.S. 4th Infantry Division's 1st Battalion, 66th Armored Regiment, detained a suspected terrorist on Wednesday northwest of Baghdad.

The detainee is suspected of being a member of a bomb-making cell and responsible for a roadside bomb that killed one U.S. Soldier in February.

## Finding trouble

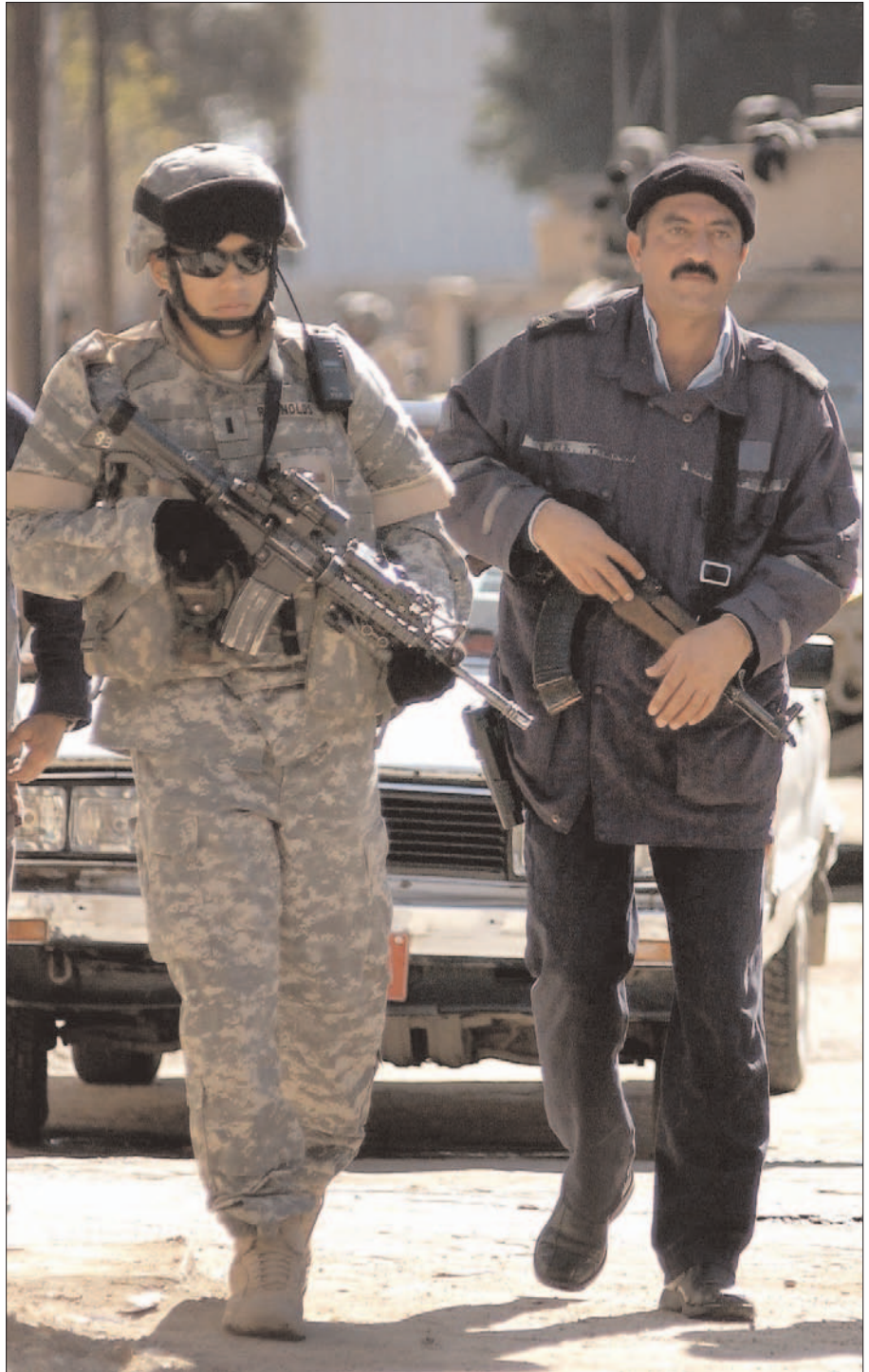
Multi-National Division - Baghdad Soldiers discovered and safely detonated a large roadside-bomb near a mosque in the Saydiyah neighborhood of southwest Baghdad on Feb. 28.

Soldiers from 4th ID's 8th Squadron, 10th Cavalry Regiment, contacted Iraqi Security Forces and an explosive ordnance disposal team after discovering the bomb.

The EOD team determined that the bomb was booby-trapped and was unable to be safely moved.

While members of the Iraqi Public Order Brigade secured the area, the squadron's commander, working with the ISF, contacted the Imam of the mosque and explained the situation.

The controlled detonation caused minimal damage to the mosque. MND-B civil affairs teams will assist the Imam in repairing the damage. Civil engineers will also assist in the



U.S. Army photo by Staff Sgt. Russell Lee Kukika  
**1st Lt. John Reynolds of the 101st Airborne Division and an Iraqi Police officer on a foot patrol in Kirkuk.**

project.

## Detain and succeed

MND-B Soldiers detained a suspected terrorist and discovered a cache of weapons and U.S. and Iraqi current-

cy on Feb. 28 southeast of Baghdad.

## We have your weapons

Soldiers from the 101st Airborne

*See OPERATIONS, next page*





U.S. Army photo by Spc. Charles W. Gill

**Pvt. John Robinson of the 101st Airborne Division, provides security during a routine search of residences near Beiji on Feb. 21. The mission gave Soldiers of the 4th Iraqi Army Division real-world training.**

## Operations

*from previous page*

Division's 1st Squadron, 61st Cavalry Regiment, discovered a cache containing two AK-47s, bullets, U.S. and Iraqi currency and five cell phones. Soldiers detained one male at the residence.

### Fallujah finds

Coalition Forces conducted multiple raids on Feb. 27, northeast of Fallujah to capture Al-Qaeda in Iraq facilitators involved in logistical support of suicide bombers, foreign fighters and terrorist funding.

Numerous safe houses were targeted by Coalition Forces.

Troops detained 61 people who will be questioned regarding their knowledge of, or involvement in, terrorism.

There were a large number of weapons and ammunition found during the raids, and the caches were destroyed in place.

U.S. Army photo by Spc. Jason Thompson

**Soldiers from the 9th Iraqi Army Division watch over the streets of the Kadhamiya area of Baghdad on Monday.**





# Iraqi Army 6th Division takes charge in capital

Story and photo by Sgt. 1st Class Rick Brown  
Multi-National Security Transition Command - Iraq

**BAGHDAD** — The 3rd Brigade, 6th Iraqi Army Division assumed battlespace responsibility of an area covering western Baghdad and eastern Abu Ghraib from the 1st Brigade Combat Team, 10th Mountain Division, on March 2.

The 6th Iraqi Army Division commander, Maj. Gen. Mobder, as well as U.S. Army 4th Infantry Division commander, Maj. Gen. James Thurman were among the guests at the transfer ceremony. U.S. Army Col. Jeffrey Snow, 1st Brigade Combat Team commander, made the official hand-over.

"When you bleed, we bleed," said Snow in his address. "I have never seen as much determination as I have seen in the Muthana Brigade."

Snow continued to credit the Iraqi Soldiers for building the 3rd Brigade to 1,500 troops in just six months.

"You have changed the character of Baghdad and of Abu Ghraib," said Snow. "Without your efforts, there would be no security and no future for the Iraqi people."

Maj. Gen. Mobder told his Soldiers that they must be loyal to Iraq, not to a sect, saying that they have taken an oath to protect Iraq and the Iraqi people. "The terrorists try to poison us. They try to separate the Iraqi people," he said.

Mobder said that the United States helped rebuild Japan, Germany and Korea after wars and it will do the same in Iraq.

"We are demanding more effort from [the Iraqi Army] and the avoidance of sectarian actions - we are looking to the future. We are grateful to our Coalition partners," said Mobder.



## Marines

from page 1

Soldier, during the small courtyard ceremony attended by Army Gen. George W. Casey Jr., Multi-National Force - Iraq commanding general, and Army Lt. Gen. Peter W. Chiarelli, Multi-National Corps - Iraq commanding general. The unfurling of I MEF's colors and battle streamers symbolized the transfer of authority.

During his brief comments, Zilmer noted the accomplishments of II MEF (Forward) and 2nd Marine Division commanding general Maj. Gen. Richard A. Huck and his Marines and Sailors, who are returning to the United States this week.

"It is an honor to follow your lead," Zilmer said to Huck. "We have watched from afar for the last year...the great work (you and your team) have done. You have written new pages in the history of the 2nd Marine Division."

During 2005, MNF-W conducted major operations, such as Steel Curtain in November, and provided security during the Iraqi national elections in December 2005.

This is the third time I MEF has deployed in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom. Throughout the two previous deployments, I MEF was crucial in bringing stabilization to the western province of Al Anbar.

Zilmer emphasized the difference of this year's mission.

"Our mission here first and foremost is to develop the capabilities of the Iraqi security forces to allow them to win this counter-insurgency in Iraq," said the Operation Desert Storm veteran.

Zilmer also addressed Iraqi Security Force commanders in the audience.

"I look forward to the great association that we will develop over the next couple months as we collectively work to make our forces much stronger and win this important conflict."



U.S. Marine photo by Cpl. Jon C. Guibord  
**Army Gen. George W. Casey Jr., commanding general of Multi-National Force - Iraq, and Maj. Gen. Richard A. Huck, commanding general of 2nd Marine Division and II Marine Expeditionary Force (Forward) salute during the Iraqi and American National Anthems.**

**An Iraqi Soldier stands ready prior to a live-fire demonstration at Forward Operating Base Constitution on March 2.**



# Rebuilding Iraq

Projects that are shaping a nation

## Mosul

New classrooms at six different schools around Mosul will give more than 900 students a better place to learn.

## Arbil

A \$4 million electrical distribution project is complete in Arbil.

## Fallujah

A wastewater treatment plant in Fallujah is complete, along with water mains serving about 3,200 homes in the western part of the city.



## Baghdad

More than 1,000 residents in Mahalla have fresh water with the installation of five miles of pipe.

## Hilla

Two police stations are complete in Hilla.



## Said Ashour

More than 5,000 people in Said Ashour have clean water with the completion of a water tower.

Children in Karbala now have first-rate emergency health care with the modernization of the city's pediatric hospital.







U.S. Army photo by Staff Sgt. Alfred Johnson

**Iraqi Soldiers from the 4th Iraqi Division exit a Chinook at FOB Brassfield-Mora after completing their mission during Operation Katrina on Feb 27. U.S. soldiers from the 187th Infantry Regiment and Iraqi Soldiers participated in operations to eliminate insurgent activity southwest of Samarra.**



U.S. Army photo by Staff Sgt. Kevin L. Moses Sr.

**Iraqi Soldiers from 3rd Brigade, 6th Iraqi Army Division march during a transfer of authority ceremony at FOB Constitution on Thursday.**



**An Iraqi Soldier secures a perimeter in Rushadah.**

U.S. Navy photo by Petty Officer 1st Class Michael Larson



**Iraqi Soldiers unload from a helicopter to search a farm outside of FOB Normandy on Tuesday. They searched for weapons and items used in making IED's during Operation Yorktown Flash.**

U.S. Army photo by Private First Class William Servinski II

## Facing the threat

**Iraqi Security Forces take aim at insurgents across the nation**

Photos can be found on [www.mnf-iraq.com](http://www.mnf-iraq.com)